

Mr. Speaker, I support the amendment to reduce the NEA's funding offered by Mr. STEARNS of Florida. Mr. STEARNS amendment would shift a small amount—2 percent—of the NEA funds to wildland fire management. The NEA is funded at \$98 million. Private funds for the arts are in excess of \$ 10 billion. This is \$10,098,000,000 for the arts. Mr. Speaker, just outside of my hometown of Ft. Collins, Colorado a massive wildfire is raging, destroying homes and wildlife habitat. This is only one of thousands of wildfires not just in the West, but the entire United States. Is 2 percent too much to ask for a serious threat which is affecting thousands of people? Is 2 percent too much to ask for when you contrast my plea with the highly offensive and political "productions" the taxpayers are involuntarily funding through the NEA? Clearly, such a small transfer is not too much to ask, and is the right and responsible action for Congress to take. How can anyone argue seriously for more funding for productions like "The Pope and The Witch" against fire management funds?

The Stearns amendment is a concerted effort to regain those federal dollars that were so egregiously misused. The amendment sends a clear message to the NEA: Congress will not support the use of taxpayer dollars to promote anti-Catholic hate speech or any other anti-religious bigotry. I am outraged, not only as a Catholic, but as a citizen of this country founded on principles of religious tolerance. The government of the United States has no place in financially endorsing the efforts of a communist playwright in his political mission of defaming a sacred institution which is embraced by millions of Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I am an ardent defender of free speech, and believe firmly in the right of free Americans to speak against any virtue, yet we must not confuse the right to "free speech" with the perversion of "subsidized speech." Mr. Fo's right to say what he will clearly does not entail a right to public funding. In fact the greater offense is to the conscientious Americans forced to subsidize Fo's bigotry at the hands of the NEA's despotic administrators.

It is time the United States government remove itself from the dangerous practice of supporting anti-religious campaigns of any kind whether in the name of art. The amendment is a necessary step in doing just that.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. EVA M. CLAYTON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2000

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, June 21, 2000, I was unavoidably detained and missed rollcall vote No. 298.

Had I been present, the following is how I would have voted: Rollcall No. 298 (H. Res. 528) "yea". "Providing for consideration of H.J. Res. 90; Withdrawing the Approval of the Congress from the Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization."

HINCHEY AMENDMENT

SPEECH OF

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 21, 2000

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Chairman, I strongly support the amendment offered by the gentleman from New York Mr. HINCHEY.

Congressman HINCHEY has been a tireless crusader for the rights of our nation's veterans, and this amendment highlights this fact by forcing the VA to abandon its flawed funding formula for providing for the health care needs of America's veterans.

Under the current system, VERA bases its resource allocation on sending more dollars to areas where there are more veterans—not where the needs are the greatest.

While that may sound rationale—the result has been horrendous for areas of the country like Queens and the Bronx, where I represent.

The facts bare out that increasingly more VA dollars are going to the South and Southwest portions of the country where more veterans live—veterans who are often younger and healthier. The result is less resources in the areas of the country, like New York City, where the veterans are older, sicker, and in more desperate need of care.

I held a recent veterans Town Hall meeting in my district at the Eastern Paralyzed Veterans Association office in Jackson Heights.

There, a constituent informed me of a VA hospital he saw while on vacation in Florida.

It was a state of the art facility, with plenty of doctors and nurses on call—and no patients.

They informed me that the place was virtually empty—but they have the best money can buy.

In New York City, meanwhile, we continue to see lay-offs of the professional doctors and nurses at our VA hospitals and clinics; long lines for care; and a far too high ratio of nurses per patient.

I am not saying that we should deprive our veterans in the South and Southwest part of the country their fair share of resources—all we ask for this amendment is that the VA provide equal treatment and resources to all veterans regardless of where they reside.

It is a shame that the VERA system has pitted veterans in one region of the country versus veterans in other regions.

Therefore, I am supportive of the Hinchey amendment to prohibit any federal funds from implementing or administering the VERA system.

I ask all of my colleagues from throughout the nation to support this amendment that has caused so much pain for so many veterans.

IN HONOR OF THE LATE ROBERT TRENT JONES, SR.

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2000

Mrs. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life of one of the legendary figures in the world of golf, Robert Trent Jones, Sr. When Trent Jones died last week at the age of 93,

he was regarded as the greatest golf course designer in history and the patriarch of the first family of golf.

His accomplishments in golf course construction and design are stunning in both their scope and beauty. He created more than 350 courses and remodeled more than 150 others. In a profession where designing a half-dozen well-regarded courses is an achievement, 79 of Trent Jones's courses were used for national championships including the U.S. Open. Every continent in the world hosts one of his courses, and he was fond of saying, "The sun never sets on a Robert Trent Jones golf course."

The U.S. Open was played so many times on a Robert Trent Jones, Sr. course he became inextricably linked to this premier golf event. He was known as the "Open Doctor" because he frequently was called to change a course in anticipation of it hosting the world's top golfers at the Open.

And while the "Open Doctor" was a name he was pleased to be called in public, he was just as proud of the names he was called by golfers, privately muttered under their breath as they finished a round on one of his courses. Trent Jones believed a golfer needed to attack a course—and the course should attack back. His courses were beautiful to look at, but a challenge to play. He believed par meant par. To break par one should be an extraordinary golfer.

Golf is a game where stories and legends have a particular importance. Trent Jones enjoyed the stories professional golfers told about his courses and the challenge they presented. The great Ben Hogan called one of his courses a "monster" and at a reception for Hogan's U.S. Open victory Mr. Hogan told Mr. Jones's wife, Lone, "If your husband had to play this course for a living, he'd be on the breadline." Twenty years later at another U.S. Open a professional golfer said the course was too difficult. When the pro was asked what the course was missing he said, "Eighty acres of corn and a few cows."

In a now legendary story, at the 1954 U.S. Open, golfers were complaining that a hole Trent Jones had redesigned for the tournament was too difficult. Jones, himself an outstanding golfer, played the hole prior to the tournament with the club pro, the tournament chair and another golfer. Other Open golfers gathered around the tee in eager anticipation of tee shots going into a huge water hazard Jones had placed in front of the green.

After the first three golfers teed off and made it to the green, Mr. Jones swung a 4-iron and promptly made a hole in one. Turning to the golfers around him he said, "Gentlemen, the hole is fair. Eminently fair."

Mr. Speaker, in addition to all of these achievements, Robert Trent Jones, Sr. was the head of perhaps golfing's greatest dynasty. His two sons, Robert Trent Jones, Jr. and Rees Jones are also world famous golf course designers and are icons in the golfing world.

Robert Trent Jones, Sr. died last week on the eve of the 100th U.S. Open at Pebble Beach in California. The tournament, won by Tiger Woods, was one of the most memorable played and signaled the arrival of an outstanding champion.

One legend departing and one just arriving. Trent Jones would have understood the beauty and harmony of that. He knew that was